



Ms. Louise O'Reilly, TD
Dáil Éireann,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2

2nd December 2019

PQ 48893/19 – To ask the Minister for Health the number of children waiting for a dental appointment at 31 October 2019 or latest date available in north county Dublin in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. – Louise O'Reilly

Dear Deputy O'Reilly,

The Health Service Executive has been requested to reply directly to you in the context of the above Parliamentary Question, which you submitted to the Minister for Health for response. I have examined the matter and the following outlines the position.

DNCC Dental operates a schools programme for school children and children with special needs (who would normally be seen annually). This programme provides a dental examination and associated treatments/prevention for 6th, 2nd and 4th classes and coincides with key dental development stages. 6th class are the first to be prioritised because this will be their last assessment and secondly to detect orthodontic anomalies that could cause issues if not picked up. 2nd are the next class as it is their first assessment with the service and 4th class are the last. However, missing 4th class means that there could be a higher treatment need in 6th class as well as not assessing potential orthodontic issues earlier.

Due to staffing issues and a growing population, Dublin North has been unable to examine 4th class for the last 2 years. Balbriggan has been cited as the fastest growing population in Ireland. This has an obvious impact on the service and the area has not been allocated additional staff to cope with this increased workload. These children will be seen in 6th class. There are currently 120 children in Balbriggan that are still to be called from last year's targeted class and they will be assessed in the next 12 weeks (these are not included on the table below).

Children Awaiting Targeted Assessment

| End of October 2019 | 0 – 12 Weeks | 12 – 26 Weeks | 26 – 52 Weeks | >52 Weeks |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Dublin North | 7378 + (4 th Class) | | | |

Children Awaiting Treatment - Oral Surgery

| End of October 2019 | 0 – 12 Weeks | 12 – 26 Weeks | 26 – 52 Weeks | >52 Weeks |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|-----------|
| Dublin North | 74 | | | |

The figures provided have not been broken down into different weeks as it is not possible to predict when these children may be seen. To provide some background, the consent forms for 2nd and 6th classes are sent at the start of the academic year and the children are called for their assessment throughout the year. We do not have numbers for 4th class but I would estimate that it would close to 4000 children who will not receive a targeted exam in 4th class.

I trust this information is of assistance to you but should you have any further queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Des O'Flynn
Head of Service Primary Care